IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1.   (previously presented) A communication network, comprising:

at least two mutually different routing paths for commonly sourcing data packets; and

a switch having a plurality of inputs respectively coupled to the routing paths for receiving the data packets, and an output for forwarding the data packets;

wherein in response to a data packet being received out of order at a first of the plurality input ports, data packets received at the first input port are discarded for a period of time while data packets received at the other input ports are processed, such that the data packets forwarded on the output are in correct packet order.

2.   (previously presented) The communication network according to claim 1, wherein in response to a commonly sourced data packet being received out of order at a second of the plurality input ports, commonly sourced data packets received at all of the input ports are discarded for a period of time.

3.   (previously presented) The communication network according to claim 1, wherein the period of time lasts until the switch is informed that re-ordering of the commonly sourced data packets is no longer possible.

4.   (previously presented) The communication network according to claim 1, wherein the period of time has a predetermined length of time.

5.   (previously presented) The communication network according to claim 1, wherein the communication network is used by an Ethernet Network.

6.   (previously presented) A switch for use in a communication network, the switch receiving data packets having a packet order, determining whether the received data packets are in correct order, and forwarding the received data packets in correct packet order, the switch comprising:

at least two incoming ports for receiving data packets via respective routing paths and an output port for forwarding data packets;

wherein in response to a commonly sourced data packet being received out of order at a first of the plurality input ports, commonly sourced data packets received at the first input port are discarded for a period of time while commonly sourced data packets received at the other input ports are processed.

7.   (previously presented) The switch according to claim 6, wherein:

in response to a commonly sourced data packet being received out of order at a second of the plurality input ports, commonly sourced data packets received at all of the input ports are discarded for a period of time.

8.   (previously presented) The switch according to claim 6, wherein the period of time lasts until the switch is informed that re-ordering of the commonly sourced data packets is no longer possible.

9.   (previously presented) The switch according to claim 6, wherein the period of time has a predetermined length of time.

10.   (previously presented) The switch according to claim 6, wherein the communication network is used by an Ethernet Network.

11.   (previously presented) A switch configured for receiving data packets having a packet order, determining whether the received data packets are in correct order, and forwarding the received data packets in correct packet order, comprising:

a plurality of input ports for successively receiving said data packets from a respective plurality of routing paths; and

an output port for forwarding data packets;

wherein in response to a data packet being received out of order at a first of any one of the plurality input ports, data packets are discarded for a period of time at the first input port while being allowed at the other input ports.

12.   (previously presented) The switch of claim 11, wherein the data packets are forwarded without the discarded data packets received at the first of the input ports.

13.   (previously presented) The switch of claim 11, wherein the period of time is a predetermined period of time.

14.   (previously presented) The switch of claim 11, wherein the period of time is terminated in response to a determination that a data packet condition is no longer possible.

15.   (previously presented) The switch of claim 13, further configured to discard data packets for the period of time at all input ports apart from a single input where data packets are determined to be arriving in the correct order.

16.   (previously presented) The switch of claim 15, wherein only data packets from the single input where data packets are determined to be arriving in the correct order are forwarded.